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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4285th meeting of the Security Council, held on 2 March 2001, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Burundi", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council strongly condemns the recent attacks by armed groups in Burundi, particularly those launched on Bujumbura by the Forces for National Liberation (FNL). The timing of these actions is of particular concern since they were launched during the meeting of the parties to the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement (the Arusha Agreement) on Burundi convened by the Facilitator, Nelson Mandela, on 25 February 2001 in Arusha, Tanzania. The Council calls for the immediate cessation of these attacks.

"The Security Council expresses its strong disapproval of all acts aimed at undermining the peace process in Burundi. The Council urges all sides to exercise restraint and to refrain from any action that may exacerbate the situation.

"The Security Council condemns the deliberate targeting of the civilian population by the armed groups and calls upon all parties to abide by international humanitarian law and in particular to refrain from any further attacks or any military action that endangers the civilian population.

"The Security Council reiterates its call on the FNL and the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) to cease hostilities immediately and to join the peace process. The Council recalls the meeting in Libreville on 9 January 2001 between the President of the Republic of Burundi and the leader of the FDD and urges the continuation of this process. The Council calls on all the parties, including the armed groups, to engage in dialogue immediately so as to allow an early cessation of hostilities and to reach agreement on a permanent ceasefire.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of providing urgent humanitarian assistance to civilians displaced by the hostilities, and calls upon all parties to guarantee safe and unhindered access by humanitarian personnel to those in need. The Council reiterates its request to the donor community to help the Government of Burundi, United Nations agencies and the humanitarian community to respond effectively to the needs of the population

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of Burundi. The Council also urges donors to deliver on the commitments made at the Paris Donors Conference on 11 and 12 December 2000.

"The Security Council takes note of the scheme for power-sharing arrangements among parties to the Arusha Agreement worked out by the fourteenth Summit Meeting of the Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi, held in Arusha, Tanzania on 26 February 2001 and calls on all the parties to reach early agreement on the outstanding issues related to the transitional power-sharing arrangements and to give their full cooperation to the Facilitator.

"The Security Council stresses that the key to achieving lasting peace in Burundi lies with the Burundian parties. It is convinced that compromise is the only means to resolve the conflict, and to this end urges all parties to work towards settling outstanding differences over the peace accord, and to proceed to its implementation.

"The Security Council reaffirms its full support for the continuing efforts of the Facilitator, the Regional Peace Initiative and the Implementation Monitoring Committee to bring peace to Burundi. The Council also emphasizes the role of the Implementation Monitoring Committee in advancing the peace process. It takes note of the Communiqué of the 14th Summit Meeting of the Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi held in Arusha, Tanzania on 26 February 2001. It also reiterates its readiness to consider practical ways in which it can best support the peace process, and the implementation of the Arusha Agreement.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter."